

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA

UNCLAS STATE 178385

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, PE

SUBJECT: ARMS SALES TO PERU

1. FOLLOWING REPORT MOVED ON AP WIRE HERE YESTERDAY:

QUOTE WASHINGTON (AP) -- THE UNITED STATES HAS PLACED SHARP RESTRICTIONS IN RECENT MONTHS ON MILITARY AID TO PERU, FOLLOWING A CONGRESSIONALLY IMPOSED BAN ON ARMS AID TO NEIGHBORING CHILE, INFORMED SOURCES SAID.

QUOTE THE GOAL, ACCORDING TO INFORMANTS, IS TO AVOID CREATING A POWER IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

QUOTE ONE EXAMPLE OF THE NEW POLICY WAS REPORTED ADMINISTRATION REJECTION OF A PERUVIAN REQUEST TO PURCHASE A MISSILE SYSTEM. THE TYPE OF SYSTEM WAS NOT SPECIFIED.

QUOTE WASHINGTON IS SAID TO HAVE REJECTED OUTRIGHT UNCLASSIFIED

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OR RESORTED TO DELAYING TACTICS ON OTHER PERUVIAN REQUESTS FOR ADVANCED WAR MATERIAL.

QUOTE THE ADMINISTRATION WAS AWARE THAT RESTRICTIONS

ON ARMS CREDIT SALES TO PERU COULD DAMAGE RELATIONS WITH THAT COUNTRY, BUT IT DECIDED THAT THE NEED FOR A POWER EQUILIBRIUM IN THE AREA DESERVED A HIGHER PRIORITY.

QUOTE THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS REQUESTED \$20.5 MILLION IN U.S. GOVERNMENT-FINANCED MILITARY SALES TO BOTH PERU AND CHILE FOR FISCAL 1975. BUT CONGRESS PROHIBITED THE CHILE ALLOCATION IN PROTEST AGAINST ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS THERE.

QUOTE THE ACTION RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE MILITARY BALANCE WOULD SHIFT IN PERU'S FAVOR, A SITUATION DESCRIBED BY OFFICIALS AS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS IN LIGHT OF THE TRADITIONAL RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. END QUOTE.

2. DEPARTMENT IS REPLYING TO QUERIES ON THIS STORY AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE U.S. HAS A LONG-STANDING ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH PERU. THAT RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES.

B. AT THE SAME TIME, THE U.S. HAS ALWAYS KEPT IN MIND THE OBVIOUS NEED FOR AN ARMS BALANCE IN THE REGION.

3.Q:IS IT TRUE AS THE REPORT SAYS THAT YOU REJECTED A PERUVIAN REQUEST TO PURCHASE A MISSILE SYSTEM?

A: NO.

4. Q: HAS PERU SOUGHT TO PURCHASE SUCH A SYSTEM AND IF SO WHAT KIND IS IT?

A: PERU HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST FROM TIME TO TIME IN BUYING VARIOUS TYPES OF MISSILE SYSTEMS (SURFACE-TO SURFACE AND SURFACE-TO-AIR). SUCH REQUESTS WHERE THEY ARE OF A FORMAL NATURE ARE UNDER REVIEW. INGERSOLL
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